

Message Text

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PAGE 01 DJIBOU 00443 300410Z
ACTION EB-08

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TO SECSTATE WASHDC 805
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AMEMBASSY PARIS

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E.O. 11652: N/A
TAGS: BEXP, EAIR, DJ
SUBJ: DJIBOUTI GOVERNMENT REQUESTS INFO ON AIRCRAFT LEASE OR
PURCHASE

REF: DJIBOUTI 77 558

1. EMBASSY RECEIVED NOTE FROM FOREIGN MINISTRY 28 MARCH
REQUESTING USGOV ASSISTANCE IN ESTABLISHING CONTACT WITH
U.S. AIRCRAFT MANUFACTURERS FOR INTENTION ESTABLISHING
PROGRAM IN COLLABORATION DJIBOUTI GOVERNMENT FOR EXPANSION AIR
DJIBOUTI SERVICES IN EAST AFRICAN AND MIDDLE EASTERN AREAS. FULL TEXT
OF NOTE FOLLOWS (IN TRANSLATION):

2. QTE. (COMPLEMENTARY OPENING)..AND HAS THE HONOR TO MAKE KNOW
ITS INTENTION TO DEVELOP THE "AIR DJIBOUTI" AIRLINE COMPANY.
IN FACT, IT APPEARS THAT OUR AIRLINE COMPANY COULD ENLARGE ITS
AIRLINE SERVICES TO
NEIGHBORING COUNTRIES: KENYA, SOMALIA, ETHIOPIA, SOUTHERN YEMEN, NORTH
YEMEN, SAUDI ARABIA, SUDAN AND EGYPT.

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PAGE 02 DJIBOU 00443 300410Z

3. THE TWO DHC 6 TWIN OTTER 200 AIRCRAFT WHICH AIR DJIBOUTI POSSESSES
CANNOT COVER SUCH AN ACTIVITY. IT WOULD THEREFORE BE DESIRED
THAT A STUDY BE MADE IN ORDER TO DETERMINE IF THE ACQUISITION
(BY LEASE OR PURCHASE) OF TWO MIDDLE-RANGE JET AIRCRAFT (BOEING,
DOUGLAS, ETC.) WOULD BE ECONOMICALLY JUSTIFIED.

4. AS A CONSEQUENCE, YOU ARE REQUESTED TO MAKE KNOWN THROUGH YOUR

SERVICES TO THE INTERESTED U.S. COMPANIES OUR DESIRE IN MAKING SUCH A STUDY. IF SUCH A STUDY SHOULD HAVE POSITIVE RESULTS, IT IS TO THE COMPANY WHICH HAS MADE SUCH A STUDY THAT WE WILL TURN FOR THE ACQUISITION OF SUCH EQUIPMENT. (COMPLIMENTARY CLOSE) UNQTE.

5. THE ABOVE DIPLOMATIC NOTE REPRESENTS THE CULMINATION OF SEVERAL MONTHS WORK BY THIS EMBASSY TO ENCOURAGE THE GOVERNMENT OF DJIBOUTI TO LOOK SERIOUSLY AT ITS ADVANTAGEOUS GEOGRAPHIC AND POLITICAL POSITIONS TO SERVE AS A FEEDER AIRLINE FOR THE LONG-RANGE AIR FRANCE SERVICES NOW PROVIDED DJIBOUTI. WE ARE NOT EXPERTS IN THE AIRLINE DEVELOPMENT BUSINESS, BUT WE ARE AWARE THAT TRAVELERS AND CARGO IN THIS PART OF THE WORLD ARE FREQUENTLY REQUIRED TO MAKE LONG AND COSTLY DETOURS TO GO ANYWHERE OTHER THAN FRANCE OR THE INDIAN OCEAN HOLIDAY CENTERS. THERE ARE NO FLIGHTS BETWEEN DJIBOUTI AND MOGADISCIO, SANA AND NAIROBI. THERE IS ONLY ONE FLIGHT PER WEEK TO ADDIS ABABA. WITH COMING OF PEACE TO OGADEN, THERE WILL BE SUBSTANTIAL INCREASE IN TRAFFIC BETWEEN SAUDI LABOR CENTERS AND NORTHERN SOMALIA. AT PRESENT THE THOUSANDS OF SOMALIS WORKING IN SAUDI ARABIA ARE REQUIRED TO GO THROUGH MOGADISCIO.

6. THE MATTER HAS BEEN DISCUSSED WITH FRENCH AMBASSADOR BASTOUIL WHO EXPRESSED HIS GOVERNMENT'S COMPLETE SUPPORT FOR ANY SUCH EXPANSION OF AIR DJIBOUTI SERVICES. THE RELUCTANCE OF AIR FRANCE TO PARTICIPATE FINANCIALLY IN SUCH AN ENTERPRISE, ACCORDING TO THE LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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PAGE 03 DJIBOU 00443 300410Z

FRENCH AMBASSADOR, IS DUE TO TIGHT FINANCIAL PICTURE AND BASIC CONSERVATISM IN DEALING WITH A RANGE OF COUNTRIES THAT THEY EITHER NOW SERVE FROM PARIS OR THAT THEY DO NOT KNOW SO WELL.

7. THE EMBASSY REQUESTS THAT ALL U.S. MANUFACTURERS OF MIDDLE-RANGE JET AIRCRAFT, WHICH ASSUME TO BE DEFINED AS MODELS LIKE BOEING 737 AND DOUGLAS DC-9. WE BELIEVE THAT SUCH SALES AS MIGHT BE DEVELOPED BY ASSISTING DJIBOUTI AT THIS TIME WILL EITHER BE FINANCED OR AT GUARANTEED BY ONE OR MORE OF MODERATE ARAB STATES, PARTICULARLY SAUDI ARABIA.

8. PLEASE ADVISE WHICH MANUFACTURERS CONTACTED AND THEIR REACTIONS.
CLARKE

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